

he made atonement for sin and refuses or neglects to accept him for a personal Saviour, ever be saved?

Take a divine Christ out of the Bible and what have we left? May we not say with Mary in answer to the question when she saw the empty tomb, "Why weepest thou?" "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him?"

W. W. M...

Statesville, N. C.

BY FAITH THE WALLS OF JERICHO FELL DOWN.

A scene unaccountably strange rises to our imagination as we read these words. We seem to be transferred in spirit to the warm, fertile valley of the Jordan, running north and south. To the east lie the mountains of Moab, to the west the perpendicular walls of the mountains of Palestine. Through the middle runs the tortuous course of the Jordan river, a stream varying in width from sixty to three hundred feet, and at the fords varying in depth from twelve inches in summer to twelve feet or more in the spring time.

Three principal fords were known upon the river, one to the south near Jericho, one half way between the Dead Sea and Gennesaret, and one far away to the north. Naturally these fords would govern the course of trade. Hence it is not surprising to find at the southwest of this plain, immediately under the steep sides of the Palestine mountains, and some eight miles from Jordan, in ancient times the wealthy, strong city of Jericho—the entrepot of commerce between Egypt with its linen and Babylon with its silks.

It seems to have been a wealthy city, and to such an extent that Achan could lay hold of and conceal one hundred ounces of silver, twenty ounces of gold and a goodly Babylonish garment without special difficulty.

Its walls probably included a large perennial spring, the same whose waters were subsequently healed by Elisha. We have every reason to suppose that a town of wealth and trade like this, lying on the borders of thievish Moab, would be strongly fortified, and it was. Within the last two years its massive walls have been uncovered.

In the plain before the city lay the camp of Israel, two or three million men, women and children. They have just crossed the swollen river, have just reconsecrated themselves to Jehovah by celebrating his two sacraments, circumcision and the passover. They march around the city seven days, and on the seventh day seven times, when suddenly a mighty shout rings upon the air.

There seems to be no cause for the shout. No city gate has been forced, no breach has been made in the wall, no sign of surrender has been offered from the city. But after the shout has been echoed back from the mountains of Judea, lo! suddenly the wall of the city totter and fall. There is no earthquake recorded, no whirlwind, no manifestation of the ordinary powers of destruction—just the simple falling of the walls so that Israel could march up into the city and capture it.

Such a picture may well arrest our attention, and make us ask for the circumstances of this victory. It was a wonderful display of divine love and divine

power, but what were the conditions precedent to this display? What had Israel done to call it forth? Simply "by faith the walls of Jericho fell down."

It was a victory, won not by arms, but simply by faith in God. How did that faith show itself?

On the part of Israel, four things are prominent. 1. A strong desire to possess this promised land, a desire which made them ready to brave all danger. 2. A willingness to abandon all their own wisdom and plans and to proceed in the matter simply according to divine direction. 3. Abandonment of all reliance on their own power, and a full reliance on divine strength for the victory. 4. Careful observance of duties enjoined by God.

These features are very evident from the history. Eight and thirty years before God had tested the Israelites on these points, and on every one they had failed. At that time when the spies had made their report (1) they had hardly ceased lusting after the fleshpots of Egypt. They cried, Would God we had died in Egypt—let us make a captain and let us return into Egypt. Their desire and longing for the promised land was feeble or absent. (2) They then had not enough of reliance on God to face the giant sons of Anak. The spies said: "We be not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we." And the people cried, "Wherefore hath the Lord brought us into this land to fall by the sword that our wives and children should be a prey?" (3) At Kadesh-barnea they were so unwilling to trust the Lord to plan for them, that after God had told them to turn southward toward the Red Sea, they presumptuously turned their faces northward toward Canaan and joined battle with the Amalekites and Canaanites. In this frame of mind were they at the time to which the Apostle refers when he says (Heb. 3:19) "They could not enter in because of unbelief."

But the thirty-eight years of wilderness life have passed, and the rising generation weary with their wanderings now look with longing eyes to their promised land of Canaan.

1. They long for the land, long to possess it, long for it so strongly that they are ready to do what seems impossible, foolish or ridiculous, if it shall but lead them thither.

2. They have acquired a readiness to abandon all reliance on their own wisdom or plans. Most vividly does this appear in the narrative. In approaching Palestine from the east, they are met by the obstacle of the river Jordan,—an entrance from the south would have avoided the river altogether, why not take the more southerly route? This route brings them at once, comparatively inexperienced in warfare, into direct contact with this walled city of Jericho—why not try some less difficult city first? Suppose Jericho were taken, this route would compel them to ascend to the up-country toward Ai, through narrow, rocky ravines, easily blockaded by an enemy: why not choose some more feasible route? Or, if they must take this route across the fords of Jordan, why take it at this April season? Consider the difficulty of crossing with the water twelve feet deep or more, with no bridge, and a current so strong that the utmost care would be needed to take